

Hearing set on discharge proposal

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SANDPOINT -- North Idaho's lakes and rivers commission is holding a public hearing on Monday to consider Southside Water and Sewer District's plan to discharge treated wastewater into the Pend Oreille River in Sagle.

The hearing is set for 1 p.m. at the Panhandle Health District Office, located at 322 Marion St.

The Pend Oreille Lake, Pend Oreille River, Priest Lake, Priest River Commission initially set the matter for discussion, but later sent word that a hearing would be held to gather input on the proposal.

The lakes and rivers commission could take action in the form of a recommendation to relevant government agencies about the appropriateness of a new point source discharge of sewage.

The sewer district proposes discharging wastewater into the river to meet demands being placed on its system, which is currently the subject of a moratorium on new hook-ups. The district said it is considering other options as well, such as piping waste across the river to Sandpoint's sewer plant or acquiring more land in Sagle to augment the existing land-application system.

Hooking into Sandpoint's system, however, would likely require annexation, and acquiring more land might force the condemnation of somebody's property.

The discharge proposal, meanwhile, has been met with widespread opposition from landowners within the district.